

Draft proposal to emend Article 74.7.3: request for comments from the Commission and zoological community

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A proposal by one us (Pulawski) to delete Article 74.7.3 from the Code was published in BZN **58**(2): 133. Deletion was proposed on the grounds that the Article is unnecessary and requires repetitious statements to be made when several lectotypes are designated in a revisionary work. A number of zoologists wrote in support of the proposal, while others were in strong disagreement with the proposal, claiming that the Article is integral and important to the way that nomenclature serves taxonomy. These comments were published in BZN **58**(2): 133–140. Following the original proposal to delete Article 74.7.3, Pulawski & Kerzhner wrote a formal proposal to the Commission Secretariat on 25 February 2001 and published a paper outlining their proposal in *Zoosystematica Rossica*, vol. **10**(1): 1–7 (December 2001). This included additional comments and an appeal to zoologists to inform the Commission about their attitudes towards the proposal. Since publication of the latter article, over 100 zoologists from around the world have sent responses to the Commission. An overwhelming majority of zoologists support deletion of the Article (to date, 105 in favor of deletion; 1 against deletion).

As currently worded, Article 74.7.3 requires that a valid lectotype designation be accompanied by a statement expressing the taxonomic purpose of the designation. The intent of introducing such a requirement was explained in detail by some of the contributors to the discussion in BZN **58**(2): 133–140, especially Prof W.D.L. Ride (Chairman of the Commission's Editorial Committee for preparation of the current edition of the Code). Article 74.7.3 may be construed as introducing some rigor into the lectotypification process in order to prevent inappropriate designations that are made purely for curatorial purposes without proper cognisance of the taxonomic and nomenclatural consequences. However, we see this wording as a potential cause of confusion and misinterpretation (an estimated 1300 lectotypes designated in publications in the year 2000 are invalid because of not following this Article), as well

as requiring an unnecessary and often repetitious task for an action that is traditionally self-defining.

After much detailed correspondence between the four of us, we have come to an agreement that some change to Article 74.7.3 is necessary and it needs to be done quickly to avoid the rising number of invalid lectotypifications that will otherwise clog the nomenclatural system. We prefer to see total deletion of Article 74.7.3, but run the risk that the Commission may not consider such a proposal as a minor one and therefore not able to be made under Articles 78.3.2 and 80.1 of the Code.

Instead, we propose as a minor change that the wording of Article 74.7.3 be emended, an example be given for clarification, and a Recommendation be added to explain the intent of the Article further. If two-thirds of the Commissioners are in agreement with this change, and that it is essentially a matter of clarification, the Commission may immediately publish an appropriate Declaration (Articles 78.3 and 80.1 of the Code; Article 1.1 of the Constitution).

We therefore propose the following:

- (1) that the wording of Article 74.7.3 be changed to: 'contain an express statement of deliberate designation (merely citing a specimen as 'lectotype' is insufficient)';
- (2) that the following Example be added directly below Article 74.7.3: 'Example: A statement such as "lectotype hereby designated", "lectotype by present designation", "I choose specimen X as lectotype" would fulfil this requirement, but "lectotype: specimen X" would not';
- (3) add the following Recommendation: 'Recommendation 74G: Not merely for curatorial purposes. The designation of lectotypes should be done as part of a revisionary or other taxonomic work to enhance the stability of nomenclature, and not for mere curatorial convenience';
- (4) that these changes be backdated to include all publications after 31 December 1999.

(2) Andrew Wakeham-Dawson, Executive Secretary

International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature, c/o The Natural History Museum, Cromwell Road, London SW7 5BD, U.K.

This draft proposal was sent to Commissioners on 8 April 2002 for their opinion on whether they considered the proposal to include a minor change to the Code or not, and inviting further refinement to the wording before the proposers made a formal proposal to the Commission for a final vote. A count of votes on 22 August 2002, showed that 20 Commissioners had voted in favour of the proposal being put to formal vote, three had voted against and votes had not been received from a further five Commissioners.

In voting against the proposal, Prof Kraus wrote (18 April 2002) that in principle he was against any changes of the Code. He felt strongly that the stability of the Code itself is of high importance. He was also against any changes to Article 74.7.3. He agreed that that the brevity of the wording of Article 74.7.3 leaves it open to misunderstanding and suggested that rewording in the form of a Declaration is appropriate. He commented that lectotype designations should *only* be made — and

hence be valid — as a part of revisionary or other taxonomic work (i.e. where there is composite type material), never as a purely curatorial exercise. Mechanical lectotype designation can easily lead to designation of a less than ideal specimen from syntypes, and a syntypic series may be more representative of a taxon than a single lectotype specimen. In conclusion, he strongly urged that Recommendation 74G of the proposal be transformed into a mandatory provision.

In a further communication (23 April 2002), Prof Kraus commented that Article 78.3.2 of the Code strictly applies to Declarations that clarify the Code. In his opinion, deletion of Article 74.7.3 must qualify as a major change and not just a clarification.

In voting against the proposal, Dr Cogger (17 April 2002) said that he was also against any changes to Article 74.7.3. He stated the primary purpose of this Article was to ensure that lectotype designations be made only for taxonomic purposes. While it has been argued that this is nearly always the purpose of lectotypification, experience would suggest otherwise. Lectotypes are often chosen arbitrarily and with consequent serious disruption to nomenclatural stability and universality. Such disruptions most often occur when lectotypes are designated as a result of the routine curatorial publication of catalogues such as type lists, or of regional or global 'checklists' that are compiled primarily from secondary sources. The utility of such publications can be seriously compromised by the nomenclatural problems they create because of inappropriate lectotype designations.

He further stated that while he would be happy to support any changes to the Article that clarify its purpose and application, he did not support a proposal that reduces the essential taxonomic purpose of lectotypification to a mere Recommendation.

In voting against the proposal, Prof Mawatari (April 2002) said that he strongly supported retention of the Article as it currently stands. He stressed that the taxonomic purpose of lectotype designations should be clearly explained in revisionary works, particularly for readers who are not taxonomists.

Although over two-thirds of the Commissioners were in agreement with the wording of draft proposal (and accepted it as a minor change for clarification), the draft is published here to allow further comments from the Commission and the zoological community at large before it is brought to formal vote.

Comments on this draft proposal are invited and should be sent to the Executive Secretary, I.C.Z.N., c/o The Natural History Museum, Cromwell Road, London SW7 5BD, U.K. (e-mail: iczn@nhm.ac.uk) before 28 February 2003.

Comment on the proposed precedence of *Bolboceras* Kirby, 1819 (July) (Insecta, Coleoptera) over *Odonteus* Samouelle, 1819 (June)
(Case 3097; see BZN 59: 246–248)

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I write in support of Case 3097, but make the following exceptions to the statement in para. 3 that the name *Odonteus* was not used between its original publication and its use by Krell in 1990. The name *Odonteus* Samouelle, 1819 was used at least once in the primary literature before 1990 with the original spelling and including the